

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM27 – Wildlife-friendly fencing



Enhancement Description

This enhancement involves the use of wildlife-friendly fencing techniques that allow free passage of daily wildlife movement and seasonal migration; and/or increase visibility to prevent entanglement and mortality.

Land Use Applicability:

Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland and Forestland

Benefits

Fencing used to define property boundaries and contain livestock creates barriers and traps to wildlife movement, fragments habitats and separate herds. Improper fence design results in injury and death through entanglement and collision. Wildlife-friendly fencing techniques allow for safe passage and increase fence visibility improving wildlife habitat, granting access to food, shelter and water.

Criteria

One or more of the following wildlife-friendly fencing techniques will be implemented to accommodate targeted wildlife species. The minimum amount of fence treated must be equal to or greater than the length of 20% of the total existing permanent fence.

- 1) Improve Passage through New Fence: New fence planned for installation will meet NRCS state standards for wildlife-friendly fence for height, wire spacing and type.;
- 2) Improve Passage through Existing Fence: Existing fence will be retrofitted, adjusted, or replaced to meet NRCS state standards for wildlife-friendly fence for height, wire spacing and type, etc., and/or openings and crossings will be created to facilitate wildlife movement. If fence is no longer needed, removal is also acceptable. Methods used to create openings or crossing include, but are not limited to:
 1. Lay-down fence
 2. Seasonal electric fence
 3. Adjustable wire fence
 4. Underpass fence with raised wire
 5. Pole top fence;



- 3) Improve visibility of new or existing fences in wildlife travel corridors or other high-risk areas for fence collisions using durable flagging, vinyl markers, PVC pipe or other similar materials that will meet NRCS state standards for spacing, interval and size. Fences that often present a high risk for collision or entanglement are those fences located in frequently travelled areas, such as, fences near water, near breeding grounds (e.g., grouse leks), or in corridors between seasonal habitats. A good example of improving visibility for prairie grouse (e.g. prairie chickens, sage grouse, etc.) in rangeland can be found at:
www.suttoncenter.org/pages/fence_marking_instructions

NOTE: If no state criteria exist follow criteria in Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks publication “A Landowner’s Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences”.

Documentation Requirements

1. Identify type(s) of wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used
2. Location on a map showing where wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used
3. Photograph each wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Additional guidance for wildlife fencing:

Wildlife Friendly Fence

Wildlife-friendly fence will have the following characteristics:

- Top wire/rail a maximum of 42” above ground.
- At least 12” between top two wires.
- Bottom wire/rail a minimum of 16” above ground.
- Smooth wire on the bottom.
- Posts at 16.5 foot intervals.
- No vertical stays.

Additional guidance for improved visibility:

Use vinyl markers and follow placement guidelines as shown at:

www.suttoncenter.org/pages/fence_marking_instructions

In sage-grouse habitat, mark all existing fences within 1/4 mile of an occupied or historic lek and all fences where collisions are known to occur.

For additional information (e.g., electric fences), refer to the following documents:

Idaho NRCS Biology Technical Note 3, *Building Wildlife Friendly Fences*.

http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/references/public/ID/BioTN3-wildlife_fence.doc

NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook, *Chapter 8 – Wildlife Management on Grazing Lands*. <http://www.glti.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/publications/nrph.html>

This activity may be used with any other enhancement, (except ANM19 may not also be used to construct wildlife friendly fence).

Potential duplicate practices: 382 - Fence